

# Memorandum

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To: Ken Deboy, Deputy District Director - 09  
Planning and Project Development

Date: November 30, 1993

File: Rte. 127


Attention: Katy Walton

From: DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
OFFICE OF TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT

Subject: Review of Highway 127 Traffic Study

In response to your request of November 5, 1993 asking for our review of the Draft Highway 127 Traffic Study proposal, Don Ochoa and I have reviewed the draft and offer our comments on the attachment to this memo. We hope that the comments and suggestions are helpful. If you have any questions, please call either Don at ATSS 485-2008 or me at ATSS 492-7760.

Sincerely,



R. Leslie Jones, Chief  
Information Services Branch

Attachment

cc: Norm Roy  
Don Ochoa

*Handwritten note:*  
12/3/93  
Don Ochoa  
to OTI

# COMMENTS TO DISTRICT 9 ON HIGHWAY 127 TRAFFIC STUDY

(November 30, 1993)

## General Comments:

- Safety First! -- Please ensure that safe operations are maintained with appropriate safety measures at all times at each survey site. A Caltrans District 9 Safety Officer should visit each survey site and approve traffic control plans before survey day(s). *Dan Jacobs*
- The survey purpose and procedures are well laid out and documented. However, there are some suggestions for improving the survey instrument or questionnaire which should be easy to implement and may reduce bias and/or improve the ease of both interviewing and analysis.
- Most of the following suggestions tend toward including specific wording on the questionnaire itself rather than leaving questions up to the interviewers to ask however they wish. This will reduce interviewer bias and yield more consistent results.
- Even more interviews could be recorded on a single legal-size sheet with all the questions for one vehicle listed and recorded on one horizontal row. This may help minimize actual interviewing time as well as reduce the number of survey sheets the interviewers have to handle, but it is not necessarily essential to the success of the survey.

## Survey Instrument:

- We suggest including the actual wording of the interviewer's introductory statement and each question on the interview form itself. This not only expedites the interview by standardizing the questions, but it reduces the possibility of respondent misinterpretation caused by the different wording of questions asked by different interviewers. Possibility: "Good morning/afternoon. We are conducting a traffic study to determine [...]. This will take only a few moments of your time. First, [...]."

- Coding boxes (with numeric codes) should be placed in front of response categories for easier recording of responses (as shown in the next bullet).
- Type of Vehicle -- Place the most common vehicle types on top of the list of categories; e.g., 1 ☐ Auto; 2 ☐ Van; 3 ☐ Pick-up; etc.
- Origin/Destination -- The actual wording of the question should be placed on the questionnaire; such as, "Where are you coming from/going to ?" or "Where was your last/next stop?" Furthermore, do you want the origins and destinations coded to locations of cities/towns, addresses, zip codes, etc.? Specify in the box for the interviewers sake; otherwise you will get many uncodable O's and D's.
- Purpose of Trip -- Ask the question you want the interviewers to use on the form itself, such as "What is the main purpose of this trip?" Also, do you want to add a category such as "Transporting Hazardous Materials", "Returning Home", or something else?
- Staying in Inyo Co.? -- Suggestion: If yes, "At what type of lodging?" And for the information on Duration of Stay: "How long will you be staying?"
- Destinations for Trucks -- Your response categories are really land use/industry categories, not destinations per se. Perhaps you should revise the wording to ask something like: "What kind of place, land use or industry is this?" Also, do you want to add a category such as "Hazardous Material Disposal"?
- Weight -- Don't you also want to know "What type of commodity are you hauling?" If so, provide for coding commodities on the form. Also, besides weight in pounds, commodities may be reported in terms of tons, gallons, cubic yards/feet, etc.; you should allow for such reporting and classification.
- Wording for a thank you to the respondents should be at the bottom of the form, particularly as a reminder to the interviewers. Something simple, such as: "Thank you very much for your cooperation. Have a nice trip."